NAQCC News

Feb 7, 2009	NAQCC Web Site	Issue #088

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1. SPRINT: Our sprint is this Tuesday evening, February 10th 8:30-10:30 PM EST (Wednesday 0130-0330Z).

Our special award certificate for this sprint goes to the winner of a drawing among those having the highest total of NAQCC membership numbers in their log and having the highest score in their division. That is, you add up each member's number for your total. If you work WY3H (0001) on 40M and K3WWP (0002) on 40M and 80M, that's a total of 5.

If you're entering one of our sprints for the first time, we welcome you and hope you will be a regular participant from now on. Last month we welcomed KB2OC, K2UFT, K1NNJ, W3IK, KB8TT, K4DXV, N5MCI, KJ4FDV, KC9BSP as first time participants and/or log submitters.

Remember this is only a brief overview of the coming sprint. Be sure to read and understand the full general sprint rules and any specific rules for this month's sprint here.

2. JANUARY CHALLENGE RESULTS: With a few days yet before the submission deadline for your results, it seems this mW challenge was very popular with many positive comments showing up in the soapboxes. Among those reporting results was VK4JAZ whom I believe is the first Aussie to ever participate in any of our club activities. We're delighted to have some 'DX' stations starting to compete in our club activities.

As always, full challenge info and results can be found here.

3. GENERAL CLUB NEWS: - I'm not sure if anyone has earned the new FISTS Area Code award yet, but no NAQCC member has told us they earned the award yet. As you should know

by now, we are offering a plaque to the first NAQCC member who earns the FISTS award. That was agreed to by Nancy WZ8C and not done unilaterally on our part. Our two clubs have always worked together very well in promoting CW. The NAQCC member who earns the first AC award must satisfy two conditions for the plaque. He/she must also be a FISTS member, and must have contacted the required 100 different area codes using QRP power.

- We've decided on the restructuring of our award fees. As we said the fee for all awards is now a uniform $3.00. Any endorsements are free if applied for at the time of initially applying for an award. If applied for later, they are free if only a web site listing is desired. If a new certificate listing the endorsement is desired, it may be obtained for a fee of $2.00. Any award that has an honor roll on the web site may have the honor roll total updated for free. We are also going to try to make log submissions uniform for all awards. That will be decided upon later.

- We've gotten a few responses from members expressing interest in our special 5th anniversary celebration in October, but we still need more. You don't have to make a firm commitment to anything yet, but we need to hear NOW if you are interested in helping out. As soon as we get enough members expressing an interest, we will tell our plans to those folks, and proceed on from there. Hopefully that will happen by the end of February as we need a lot of lead time to work on and promote the celebration. If you are interested in helping out, please contact us via email at **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET**. Thanks to WY3H, K3WWP, W1OH, K1YAN, and AF3T who've responded so far. I thought there was one more also but I may have misplaced an email in the flood of emails from our latest membership recruitment blitz. If you did express interest and are not listed, please tell us again.

- Speaking of the blitz, it has netted us some 240 new members in just a few days. We are very proud of Paul KD2MX who wrote the recruitment letter and Dave VA3RJ who distributed it to possibly every source in the world that knows about ham radio. Great job, guys. With efforts like that, we may indeed reach 5,000 members in a couple more years or less. I'd love to see that because it would make an even stronger statement that CW is alive and not just well, but thriving. It also would be a remarkable number considering that those who join our club are interested in TWO things - operating CW, and using QRP at least some of the time. Other clubs dealing strictly with CW or strictly with QRP have a much larger base to draw from for their membership since not all CW ops have an interest in QRP and not all QRP ops have an interest in CW.

Several of those new members have sent in their pictures for our gallery which currently boasts pictures of 120 of our members. It certainly adds to the enjoyment of a QSO if you know what the person you are talking with looks like. Our gallery with its crystal clear pictures is an excellent way to find that out. That's one reason we'd like still more of you to send in your picture. I know many of you have digital cameras, and it is extremely easy and cheap to take a picture and send it to us via email. Be sure to put your call and membership number in the email when you do. It saves me time because as incredible as it is to believe, I do not have all our nearly 3400 members' calls and numbers memorized. In fact you should always include your call and NAQCC number in every ham radio email you send. You can also send a regular photo or scan of a photo via regular mail if that is easier for you for whatever reason.

- Now let's segue logically to this: Speaking of recruiting, a reminder that John K3WWP is donating a book on setting up wire antennas to the member who recruits the most new members to the club between January 1 and June 30, 2009. Officers not eligible. I recently received the book, and I know it will be very helpful to anyone using wire antennas and especially to those with limited space for those antennas. Remember to get a vote for yourself, be sure to tell the person you recruit he must list you as the source when filling out the on-line application form. That's how we count the number of members you recruited. Right now 11

eligible members are tied with one recruit each, so the competition is wide open.

- I'd like to talk a bit about our challenges, sprints, and awards. First of all, the bottom line to all our activities is to increase activity on the CW bands and to show how CW is the most efficient of all modes by our use of QRP for all activities. The activities are not designed to be cutthroat "I'm better than you" activities.

Our sprints are meant for members to have fun, and more importantly to teach the art of contesting. Emphasizing the use of a straight key keeps the speed down and encourages those new to contesting to jump in. They are often scared away by the high speed frantic type of contest, but are very comfortable in our sprints. Those who don't like the slow pace have many other sprints and contests to choose from. If you want something really frantic and fast, try the quarterly National Contest Journal NA Sprints. Some have wondered why we include the 'meaningless' RST in our sprint exchange. Well, quite simply because whether it should be or not, it still is a part of the exchange in the majority of contests. Until that changes, we'll stick with an RST.

Our challenges are meant to be something relaxing that someone can work on as little or as much as they want during a whole month. We want to give the fellow sitting at the TV watching something meaningless the opportunity to think, "Hey, instead of doing this, I could be seeing if I can get some more letters for that NAQCC alphabet challenge." They are not meant to be something confined to a few hours or a couple days since that robs some folks from participating. With 672 to 744 hours available each month, that should give every member time enough to put in quite a bit of effort in satisfying the challenge. And challenge it is - not a contest. Although we do offer prizes in some of our challenges, that is not to increase competition nor participation, but a means of giving away the fine items that members and organizations are donating to the club. If someone wants that item, the challenge gives them an opportunity to work for it. Often we award such a donated prize to the winner of a drawing among all who participated and met a minimum standard for completing the challenge.

Our awards are another excellent way to show off what can be done by using CW at QRP levels. For example, many folks are proud to show that they've worked a station using a power when divided by the distance of the station comes to more than 1,000 miles per watt. The awards are not designed to be competition among members to see who earns the most awards or anything like that. They can be more or less considered to be long-term challenges for a member to see if he can make a contact with each of the continents, with 50 states, and so on.

Relaxed activites where our members can compete with themselves to do something. That's an additional bottom line to our events. After all, competing with ourselves is the only really fair competition. If you have a hunk of wire in your attic, you're certainly not going to fairly compete with a guy having a multi-element beam on a tall tower.

3. KX-1 PROJECT - Update: - A couple members think we should emphasize that if you are not sure you can be careful enough or you have a very static prone environment, you should take the precaution of wearing a grounding strap, work on an anti-static mat, keep the boards in anti-static packaging, etc.

The next session on our KX-1 project will be on President's day February 16th. Hopefully we'll have the main KX-1 rig completed then, and start work on finishing and installing the accessory boards. Details in the February 28th newsletter.

4. THE NAQCC ELMER PROJECT: - We did not receive a report from Karl N3IJR nor Ron K5DUZ for the newsletter, but rest assured they are both working hard on implementing the program, and still need your help to do so. If you can help out, send an email to pix_email_n3ijr (1K) or **NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET** and they will get back in touch with you. They need to hear from both those who have expertise in a certain area of ham radio dealing with QRP and/or CW as well as those whe need help in those areas. This can be a great part of the NAQCC, but it needs your help to become that way, so think about it, and let Ron and Karl know how you can help out.

5. CW CARTOON OF THE MONTH: Let's take a comedy break now courtesy of Dick Sylvan W9CBT. Dick has been a long-time QRP/CW operator. One of his many talents is being a cartoon artist, and he is supplying a cartoon each month for the newsletter. The NAQCC is very honored to be one of just two organizations to feature Dick's cartoons. In addition to our newsletter, Dick's cartoons appear monthly in The K9YA Telegraph, an on-line only Ham Radio E-zine where he is the staff cartoonist. Dick has also authored a book entitled "Hi Hi - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons" available via his web site. A new cartoon will be appearing in each of our even-numbered newsletters.

5. NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES BY OUR MEMBERS: There is apparently some misunderstanding about what this section is for. Quite simply it's a forum for you to tell other

members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit an article dealing with some aspect of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Send your news items and articles to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**. For your convenience any links in this section will open in a new browser window so you can come immediately back here to the newsletter just by closing that extra window.

(disclaimer) Any views expressed here are those of the member submitting them, and may not be in agreement with those of the NAQCC.

- **From John K3WWP #0002 -** I love these February challenges dealing with the Presidents. It's a way to honor in a small way 3 of our greatest Presidents - George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and my personal favorite of all - Ronald Reagan, all of whom were born in February. Just as an aside, I am proud to be perhaps one of the first people to ever vote Reagan for President. I cast a write-in vote for him in one election several years before 1980. I believe it was the 1968 election if my old age memory is correct.

Anyway back to ham radio now. Have you noticed that the sun may just be starting to stir a little bit from his long slumber? If you look at the propagation chart on my web site, you'll note that SF numbers of 70 and in the low 70's are becoming more abundant the past couple months. So maybe we'll be steering our way out of the doldrums soon, and conditions on the bands will improve. Not that they are really as horrible now as everyone, including me, say they are. If they were really bad, it would be impossible to make QRP QSO's. That's certainly not the case as is amply demonstrated just by looking at the results of our January mW challenge or my 'streak' results on my web site. The only days I've had a little difficulty getting my daily QSO occured back in the sunspot maximum years when severe solar storms almost did wipe out propagation completely. During the current minimum I haven't really had much difficulty at all.

- **From George KH6OZ #2290 -** I thought I would send, for all members to enjoy, a copy of the operating award that I received using the club's special event call, N3A/7, during the Illinios QSO Party.

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless they specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.